

## FILLING WITH THE SPIRIT AND DRUNKENNESS WITH WINE NO. 2111

A SERMON  
DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, MAY 26, 1889,  
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”  
Ephesians 5:18.*

WHILE I was reading to you just now, in the fourth and fifth chapters of Paul's letter to the Ephesian believers, I could not help feeling that you could little understand the elevation and the purity of the precepts of the apostle, as they must have appeared to the inhabitants of such a wicked city as Ephesus. When first read, these precepts must have seemed like an unearthly light. We have now a public sentiment which condemns drunkenness, lying, and many other vices which were scarcely considered worthy of censure by that degraded people. Christianity had not affected public sentiment at the time—that sentiment was distinctly immoral. The sin of fornication was scarcely judged to be sinful; theft was most common, as, indeed, it is in the East to this day; lying was universal and only blamed if committed so clumsily as to be found out. I may say of drunkenness, that, although it was not regarded as a commendable thing, yet it was looked upon as a failing of great minds, not to be too much condemned. Alexander the Great, as you know died through drink. He offered a prize on one occasion to those who could drink the most, and in that famous drinking-bout, large numbers of his chieftains and nobility died in the attempt to rival others; even of such a man as Socrates it is said (though I know not with what truth) that he was famous for the quantity that he could drink. The stories of the feasts of that age I would be ashamed to repeat; and you certainly would not have the patience to hear them. Drunkenness, and gluttony, and such like were the common faults of the great and of the small; for while some had no opportunity for gluttony—for they did not get enough to eat—they only failed to be gluttons for that reason, and not from principle. The apostle sets before his new converts, not a modified system of right and wrong, but the purest virtues, and the most heavenly graces. As the ages have rolled on, we have seen the wisdom of holding up from the first an elevated standard, both of doctrine and practice. We must not bring the standard down to the men, but the men up to the standard. We may not, with the design of making converts more rapidly, alter the pure Word with which our Lord has entrusted us.

Brethren, I am not going to speak to you tonight about the sin of drunkenness. Many of you feel an intense aversion to that degrading vice. If there are any here who require a homily upon drunkenness, they have only to let conscience speak, and it will tell them how base a sin it is; if they do not know the shamefulness of their wicked habit, there are plenty round about them who will let them know in indignant language. Perhaps of all the sins that are rife in our country today, drunkenness brings the most present misery upon mankind. A very large proportion of the need from which people suffer is due to wasteful excess in drink. You know it is so, if you are intelligent observers. Other sins may seem to go deeper into the soul, and are more subject to punishment by our laws; but for creating widespread suffering, suffering brought upon the innocent, upon the wife, and upon the child—this vice raises its head above all others! This throngs our workhouses, fills our jails, and crowds our lunatic asylums—yes—and fattens our cemeteries with carcasses of men and women who die before their time. This is the Moloch of the nineteenth century. I am not going to preach about that one particular vice tonight, as though I would saw off a big limb from the tree of evil; it is my custom to lay the axe at the *root* of the tree, aiming my blows at the very nature which bears this evil branch. Still, this is a very far spreading limb; and, as I have seen the woodmen lopping the tree before they cut it down, there will be no waste of time if I aim a blow or two at this huge branch of the tree of evil, this bough of drunkenness. It is far too

common to this day; but, thank God, through the efforts of temperance friends, and I hope, through the power of the Spirit of God upon many, it is not as it used to be; and it is regarded now in a very different light from that in which it was viewed even by Christian people years ago.

The apostle has been pleased, in this passage, guided by the Holy Spirit, to put in apposition, and, in some respects, in opposition, a prohibition, and a command—"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." He had a reason for putting these two things together. There is a very, very, very wide and deep abyss between being drunk with wine, and being filled with the Spirit. Drunkenness is down, down, down to the depths of the brute, and far lower still; fullness with the Spirit is up, up, up, to the very heights of God! How did it happen that in the same verse, without a break, Paul should put the two together—the prohibition and the command? There was a reason, and a very good reason, for this conjunction of things so far apart in character. I think that I see two reasons. The first is because there is a parallel between them—a degree of similarity amid their infinite difference. Secondly, he so placed them because there is a contrast between them of a very striking kind. The contrast is as instructive as the parallel. "Be not drunk with wine"; but hasten to the very opposite extreme, and, "Be filled with the Spirit."

**I. First, LET ME DRAW THE PARALLEL.** Why do men become drunk with wine, or other alcoholic liquors? There are several reasons. I shall not mention them all, for they are innumerable, and many of them too ridiculous to be mentioned in a sermon.

One motive is to find in wine exhilaration. It is a feast day. Let us have wine, that we may warm our hearts, and laugh, and sing, and make merry! It is a marriage day; it is a birthday; it is a royal holiday; it is something out of the common: bring forth the wine cup! So say the sons of men. When the man has drunk what he ought to think enough, feeling already a little elevated, he must drink yet more, with the same view. He would rise higher, and higher, and higher, and be filled with glee and jollity, and make uproarious laughter, and be Lord of Misrule for the day. Strong drink is taken to exhilarate; and for a while it has that effect. How some men are carried away when intoxicated! How lifted up they are! What a great man the least becomes! What a divine the man who never looked into his Bible! What a philosopher the boor that does not know his letters! What a lord of creation the loon who has not two shirts! What a hero, every way, the coward who is afraid of his shadow! He is exhilarated when he has taken wine.

I grant you, that it is natural that we should all wish to be somewhat exhilarated. We like to have stirring times in which we do not lie still and stagnant—we would have our whole nature stirred with pleasure. We like to have our high-days and holidays, even as others. "Now," says the apostle, "that you may enjoy the most exquisite exhilaration, be filled with the Spirit." When the Spirit of God comes into a man with extraordinary power, so as to fill his soul, He brings to his soul a joy, a delight, an elevation of mind, a delightful and healthful excitement which lifts him up above the dull dead level of ordinary life, and causes him to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

This is safe delight, and therefore I commend it to you. It is safe delight, because it is holy delight—holy because it is the Holy Spirit that works it in you—and He makes you to delight in everything that is pleasing to the Holy God. Seek no longer the excitement which comes from the flowing bowl; here is something safer, more suitable, more sacred, more ennobling—"Be filled with the Spirit." I know there are some Christians who never have much joy. You remember one, an old acquaintance of yours, the elder brother. His experience was expressed to his father in grumbling tones—"Lo, these many years do I serve you, neither transgressed I at any time your commandment: and yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." Far too many Christians are of that order. hear what they say—"I have always been regular in my attendance on the means of divine grace, have read my Bible, and have acted consistently with my profession; yet I know nothing of delight in God." Now, my dear friend, take this advice, "Be filled with the Spirit." You have, as yet, received only a few drops from the divine shower of His sacred influences. Ask for the rivers, the floods, the torrents of His sacred power. Let the heavenly floods come in and fill you up to the brim—then will you have a joy which shall rival the bliss of those who are before the throne of God.

Furthermore, I have known people take wine with the idea of being strengthened by it. There are such individuals still alive in the light of this advanced century. Many of the best physicians tell us that there is no strength whatever in strong drink; at any rate, whatever strength there is in the drink, it does not give any strength to the man. I am not going into physical or metaphysical discussions tonight. There is no doubt that many indulge in wine to an extreme, with the objective of getting strength from it. I believe their action to be founded on a very grave mistake. But to you Christian people, instruction comes in here, “Be not drunk with wine,” with the view of gaining strength from it—“but be filled with the Spirit,” for the Spirit of God can give you strength to the highest degree. He can gird you with spiritual strength—the strength of faith. And there is no strength like it—for all things are possible to him that believes. He can give you the strength that wrestles in prayer, that lays hold upon the angel of the covenant and will not let him go, except he grant a blessing.

The Spirit of God gives the strength to suffer and the strength to labor; the strength to receive and the strength to give out again; the strength to hope, the strength to love, the strength to conquer temptation, the strength to perform holy action. When you are filled with the Spirit, how strong you are! There is no influence about us for good when the Holy Spirit has departed; but when a man gets the Spirit of God to fill him to the full, His presence has a mystic power about it.

*“‘Tis even as if an angel shook his wings.”*

Though such a man tarries but for a short time in a place, he leaves a savor behind him that will not be forgotten. Dear brothers and sisters, whether you are preachers, or teachers, or parents, or persons engaged in the service of God in your ordinary labor—if you want strength with which to bring glory to the Most High, be filled with the Spirit. Oh, that we had in our midst many that were strong because of this!

In the next place, wine has been taken by a great many and taken to excess, to embolden them; and it does embolden them to a very high degree. A man under the influence of liquor will do what he would never think of doing at any other time—he will be rash, foolhardy, and daring to the last degree. We have heard of foreign nations whose troops have been so afraid of the fight, that they have dosed them with strong drink to induce them to march into the battle. We used to hear the expression, “Dutch courage,” which meant the boldness which came of ardent spirits—though I do not suppose the Dutch had more of it than the English. No doubt many a man under the influence of drink has risked his life, and performed what looked like feats of valor, when, indeed, he was simply beyond himself, and out of his right mind, or he would not have been so foolhardy. Wine emboldens many men in a wrong way. beloved friends, we are not to make ourselves ridiculous with fanaticism—but bold with the Spirit of truth. “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot,” in order to be emboldened to do anything; but be filled with the Spirit of the living God, wherein is quietness, and comes a courage which is to be admired, and not derided. Oh, how brave a man is when he is filled with the Spirit of God! Then, knowing a thing to be right, he resolves to do it, and he never counts the cost. He has counted that cost long ago, and reckoned that the light suffering that would come by doing right was no longer worthy to be compared with the glory of being found a faithful servant of God. When a man has little of the Spirit of God, he begins calculating the pence. “Will it pay? The thing is right enough,” he says, “but then, I cannot afford it. I know that what I am doing is wrong; but, still, I could not give it up; it would involve too much sacrifice.” That man has little, if any, of the Spirit of God; for the Spirit destroys selfishness, and all that love of gain which eats as does a canker. A man in whom the Spirit of God dwells abundantly says, “I shall never think, from this day forth, what may be to me the consequences of any course of action which the Lord, my God, commands me to follow. If it is right in the sight of God, I will do it. If God approves it, so shall it be; but if it is wrong, not a world made of gold, if it could all be mine, should tempt me to parley for a moment.” Be filled with the Spirit. It will make you bold in the cause of the Lord Jesus. How bold the martyrs were! How bravely humble women were likely to speak up for Christ! How slaves, peasants, persons of no education, faced the Roman governors—yes, stood before the Roman Emperor, himself, and were not in the least afraid! When they cried, “To the lions with them!” they flinched not from so cruel an end. They were a brave people, those early Christians, for they were filled with the Spirit. And our men and women in England, in the days of Mary—how bold they were when filled with

the Spirit! The Holy Spirit is the creator of heroes; if the Spirit of God is gone, we are a cowardly set; but if the Spirit of God shall come down upon us, as I hope He may, then every man and woman here, however timid by nature, will be able to bear witness for Christ, according as Christ shall call them to that work. O my beloved, for whom I long and pray that you may be an army for the Lord, “Be filled with the Spirit.”

Wine has been also taken in large quantities, for the destruction of pain, for the drowning of misery, and for support in the agony of a cruel death. Solomon says, “Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.” It was an old custom that when a man was doomed and about to die, they gave him some narcotic cup that he might be somewhat stupefied and suffer less. There was some mercy in this, though truly, “the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.” No doubt many persons have most foolishly taken to drink in order to forget their grief and relieve their sorrow. We must earnestly condemn such wicked conduct; but still, so it is; and the apostle puts it, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit”; for that will remove depression, and sustain under anguish in a most wonderful way; indeed, in a *holy* and *perfect* way. If you want to forget your misery, remember to apply for a sweet visitation of the Comforter. If there has lately happened some great calamity to you, and you are saying, “How shall I bear it?” the answer is, “Be filled with the Spirit of God.” Here shall you drink oblivion of the heavy trial; or, better still, you shall forget the sharpness of the trial in your knowledge that it works patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, which makes us not ashamed. O beloved friend, do not kick at the trial, be willing to bear it; but get more of the indwelling of the sacred Comforter. “Be filled with the Spirit.” Perhaps this may be a direction to some dear friend here who has lately been called to tread a more trying path than usual. “How shall I bear it, sir? How shall I bear it? I never was so tried before.” Seek earnestly for more of the Spirit of God than you ever had before. He will give you in proportion to your necessity. He is fully equal to every emergency. His consolations can balance your tribulations. Wait upon Him for the comfort of the Spirit. The day may come when you will glory in your infirmities and afflictions, because God used them to make room for more of His Spirit to dwell in you. I am certain that if you have to go home tonight to lie for the next twenty years upon a sick bed—and certain of God’s saints have not been off the sick bed for all that time; or if all your property is gone, and you are called to endure poverty during the rest of your pilgrimage; or if you shall hear of the death of the dearest one you have—if the Holy Spirit is but given in a larger measure to you, you will have more happiness, and more contentment, and be a better man by reason of all this affliction that has come upon you. God grant that you may find it to be true that you may forget your poverty and misery, and discover no gall in your most bitter cup! May you drink deep draughts of the joy of the Lord till you are filled with the Spirit of God! Touch not the wine cup, lest in this you dishonor the Holy Spirit, who by His own power is able to cheer your heavy heart.

Again, I think a fifth reason why some have been drinking is to *invigorate themselves*. They feel flat, they say. Ah, ah! If I were lecturing tonight, I could give you some of those abundant excuses for drinking which tipplers so readily invent. You can always find reasons, such as they are, when you want to pursue a career of self-indulgence; you may find them of every color—black, white, red, blue and gray, at every time, every day. The most unreasonable reasons will come cropping up if you want to do what your flesh desires. But there are some who feel, “I want a pick-me-up. I am rather down, seedy, dull. I want something that will brace me, so that I may be up to the mark.” By the time the man has had enough of his stimulant, he is worse than before. Many have most effectually knocked themselves down in their desire to set themselves up. But, Christian, if ever you feel dull, “be filled with the Spirit.” “If ever I feel dull!” cries one, “Why, I often do, even at this time I have come into the house of prayer, and do not feel as if I could worship.” Well, then, go where life and strength are to be had. One of our brethren observed to me the other day (I do not think he meant to flatter me), “I often go into the Tabernacle feeling that I cannot worship as I should; but,” said he, “*you* always seem to be lively and all right.” I thought—Ah, dear brother! You do not know much about me, or you would not praise me; for I often feel the reverse of lively—but I cannot bear to have it so, lest others should be injured by it. There is not a more dull or stupid head than mine in this place; but I have a remedy and I fly to it—I wish you would

all do so. I go to Him—you know His glorious name—He is the Resurrection and the life. I look to Him for quickening, and it comes. May that be an example to some of you whenever you feel dull! Do not say, “I cannot pray today. I cannot sing today.” No—go to the Lord to help you to present acceptable worship. It would be a great relief to me if I could be excused from preaching to you when I do not feel like preaching. Yet, it would not be a *blessing* to me, for it would encourage me in dullness, and that would be a curse. If you do not pray except when you feel like praying, you will not pray much, or pray when you most need it. My brothers and sisters, when you do not feel like praying, you ought to pray all the more, and go to the Lord to help you to pray. When one does not feel like doing the Lord’s work, he must say, “Out with you, Mr. Sluggard! You must get to your work! Stir yourself up”; and here is the hallowed power which will effectually help you—“Be filled with the Spirit.” Oh, that the Spirit of God would make us feel what poor creatures we are, and what a great Savior we have! If He would make us feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, we would burn with love to the souls of men! If He would make us rejoice in pardon bought with blood, see our justification, and realize it—if we could feel the Spirit of God melting us to tenderness or bracing us to holy bravery—then it would be that we are refreshed and stimulated after the best manner! We, then, would have found the true invigoration; and there would be no reaction after it, no falling back into a deeper depression. I wish that those who feel dull tonight may be so filled with the Spirit that they will not be content to go to sleep till they have spoken to a poor sinner about salvation and eternal life.

Once more, many men, no doubt, become drunkards from love of what is called good fellowship. “Look,” said a wife to her husband, “how can you drink at the rate you do? Why, a hog would not do so.” The wretched man replied, “No, I do not suppose that it would. It would be more sensible than I am, no doubt; but,” he said, “if there was another hog at the other side of the trough that said, ‘I drink to your health,’ this hog would be obliged to do the same; and if there were half-a-dozen of them together, and they kept on toasting one another, I expect the hog would get as drunk as I am.” Sad are the effects of evil fellowship. The fellowship in which people indulge, and which they think it necessary to stimulate themselves by drink, has led many into drunkenness. Now see the beauty of this expression, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” When the Spirit of God comes upon Christians, what fellowship they have with one another, what delight they take in holy conversation, what joy there is in meeting together for solemn worship! I do not wonder that it is added immediately after, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” See the effect of being filled with the Spirit? It brings a fellowship of holy music, sacred gratitude, and heavenly thanksgiving. It makes us feel concerning the house of prayer—

*“I have been there and still would go,  
It is like a little heaven below.”*

It makes us sing with rapture—

*“Hail, you days of solemn meeting!  
Hail, you days of praise and prayer!  
Far from earthly scenes retreating,  
In your blessings we would share.  
Sacred seasons,  
In your blessings we would share.”*

The Lord grant us divine grace to seek our fellowship where He finds it, with holy men and holy women; that among them in joyous fellowship we may rejoice and praise His name.

**II.** I cannot stay longer on this parallel; I have already been too long—now, LET ME POINT OUT THE CONTRAST. I do not think that Paul was running the parallel only, for it would dishonor the work of the Holy Spirit to think that His operations could be in all things likened to the influence of alcohol. No, the divine inspiration far excels anything that earthly excitements can produce.

“Be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot; but be filled with the Spirit.” The contrast is at the very beginning; for it is written, “Be filled with the Spirit.” Wine does not fill. No man is satisfied with all that he drinks. He is still thirsty. His thirst is often increased by that which was supposed to quench it. The



Spirit of God has a satisfying, satiating, never nauseating influence upon the heart. It fills it to the very brim, until the man delights himself in God, and cries, "My cup runs over." Then the saint becomes like the tribe of which we read, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord." Wine ministers to lust, and lust is a burning sense of need; but the Spirit of the Lord brings fullness with it, and a perfect rest of heart.

"Wine creates riot," says the apostle. And that is the second point of contrast. When men are drunk, what a noise they will make! They are ready for any disturbance; but the Holy Spirit, when you are full of Him, makes you quiet with a deep, unutterable peace. I do not say that you will not sing and rejoice, but there will be a deep calm within your spirit. I wish that some Christian people were filled with the Spirit, if there were no other effect produced upon them but that of peace, self-possession, restfulness and freedom from passion. Our friends, the members of the Society of Friends, who speak much of the Spirit of God, whatever virtues they may not have, certainly have this one—that they are, usually, a very quiet, unexcitable, peaceable people. We need more Christians of this sort. We can put up with all the uproar of the Salvation Army, if it comes in very deed from warm hearts and genuine zeal. I will not find any fault with them for a little noise, though the less of it the better. If your genius goes that way, sing unto the Lord, and blow your trumpet; but at the same time, the solid people in the church are those who possess their souls, who go about their business, who suffer, and who labor with an inward peace which is not disturbed, and they have a holy calm which is not ruffled. Do not create riot, but abide in holy peace by being filled with the Spirit. May the Lord keep you in perfect peace with your minds stayed on Him.

The next point of contrast is that wine causes contention. When men are drunk with it, how ready they are to quarrel! They make a harmless word to be an insult. Many a man, when full of wine, will bear nothing at all; he is ready to fight anybody and everybody; he cannot have his fill of fighting. But when you are filled with the Spirit, what is the result? Why, peaceful submission. Listen to this—"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Human nature likes rule; but the Spirit of God works submissiveness of mind. Instead of wanting to be first, the truly spiritual man will be satisfied to be last, if he can thus glorify God. That man who must be always king of the castle is not filled with the Spirit of God; but he that is willing to be a doormat, on which the saints may wipe their feet, is great in the kingdom of heaven! Be filled with the Spirit, and you will soon submit to inconvenience, misapprehension, and even exaction for the sake of doing good to those who are out of the way, and in the hope of edifying the people of God. Wine causes riot; the Spirit causes peace. Drunkenness causes contention; the Spirit of God causes submission.

Furthermore, drunkenness makes men foolish; but the Spirit of God makes them wise. I am keeping to the connection of my text. Read the fifteenth verse, "See, then, that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise." The drunken man cannot walk at all, because he has not made up his mind as to which way he will go; he attempts to go two ways, and ends up staggering till he falls. The man filled with the Spirit has a very definite idea of which way he is going; he knows the right way, and he deliberately chooses it; he perceives the straight and narrow way, and he steadfastly follows it—for God has made him wise. Folly clings to the wine cup; but wisdom comes with the Holy Spirit.

Drunkenness wastes time; but the Spirit of God, when we are filled with Him, makes us save it. Read the sixteenth verse—"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore be you not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot." How much of time is wasted over the unholy cup! But the child of God, when the Spirit of God enters into him, makes a conscience of his odd moments and leisure minutes. Goldsmiths sweep up the very dust of their shops, that no filings of the precious metal may be lost; and so does the Christian, when filled with the Spirit, use his brief intervals. It is wonderful what may be done in odd minutes. Little spaces of time may be made to yield a great harvest of usefulness and rich revenue of glory to God. May we be filled with the Spirit in that respect!

In the next place, drunkenness makes men forget their relationships, but the Holy Spirit makes us remember them. The rest of the chapter goes on to mention our domestic conditions as wives, husbands,

children, fathers, servants, masters. The drunken man is bad in every relation, and the drunken woman is, if possible, worse. The drunken man ought never to be a husband, but he sometimes wears that name, and then he has a power to inflict misery which he is sure to use to the utmost. The drunken man will often do towards his wife what I will not trust my lips to speak of—it would be a libel on the brutes of the stall, or the beasts of the jungle, to liken him to them.

A drunken father! Is he worth calling “father”? And it is even worse, if worse can be, when it is a drunken wife or a drunken mother. A special infamy hovers around womanhood soaked in liquor—relationships, in such instances, are quite forgotten under the influence of the accursed drink. Selfishness eats up the very heart of those who otherwise might have been the objects of reverence and love. The contrast to this is the fact that when filled with the Spirit, the husband is the tenderest of husbands, the wife the best of wives. No master is so just as the man that is mastered by the Spirit of God! No servant as diligent as he that serves the Lord. By the Holy Spirit, our relationships become ennobled; and what was but a commonplace position wears a glory of holiness about it. We are transfigured by the Spirit of God, and we transfigure everything we touch. Dear friends, you see that the contrast is a very vivid one. Look into it very narrowly, and it will repay the inspection.

Lastly, excess of drink leaves a man weak and exposed to peril; but to be filled with the Spirit!—listen to what comes of it according to the tenth verse of the next chapter—“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.” When filled with the Spirit the man is no longer naked, like the drunkard. He no longer lies upon the ground in danger as one overcome with wine. He is no longer open to the attack of adversaries, as one who sleeps through strong drink. God has made him strong, and armed him, and now he goes forth to fight in the service of his Master. I think that you will see the contrast. It is as evident as the parallel.

I shall keep you no longer except to say this. My beloved Christian friends, our heart’s desire is, that the members of this church, and, indeed, all the members of Christ’s mystical body, should be filled with the Spirit. Oh, that you may come absolutely under the sway of the Holy Spirit, and may abide under His most powerful inspirations! Do you ask how this is to be? First, reverently regard Him. Worship Him. Speak not of the Holy Spirit as “it.” Talk not of the Third Person of the adorable Trinity as an *influence*. He is very God of very God. God has guarded the sanctity of the Holy Spirit by causing a certain sin to be especially condemned, and unpardonable—the sin against the Holy Spirit. Honor Him much, then; worship Him, and adore Him, and look to Him for help.

Next, do not grieve Him. If there is anything that would grieve the Holy Spirit, let it grieve you, so that you may keep clear of it. Put away every thought, idea, principle, and act that is not agreeable to His mind. Neither live in sin, nor trifle with evil, nor fall into error, nor neglect the reading of the Word of God, nor fail to obey the commands of the Lord. Do not grieve the Comforter, but welcome Him as your best Friend. Open your heart to His influences. Watch each day to hear His monitions. Pray every morning, “Holy Spirit, speak with me, bedew me, enlighten me, set me on fire, dwell in me.” And during the day lament to yourself if you do not feel the Spirit of God moving in you, and ask why it is. “Has He left me? Is He grieved with me?” Say—

*“Return, O holy Dove! return,  
Sweet messenger of rest!  
I hate the sins that made You mourn,  
And drove You from my breast.”*

As you welcome Him when He comes, so be fit for Him to come to you and dwell in you. Be clean, for He is pure. Do not expect the Holy Spirit to dwell in a foul chamber. You cannot make that chamber like Solomon’s temple, wherein the cedar wood was overlaid with pure gold; but you can take care that it is well cleansed. Only the pure in heart shall see God. Oh, for a clean life, a clean tongue, a clean

hand, a clean ear, a clean eye, a clean heart! God give you these, and then you shall be ready for the Spirit of God to dwell in you.

And when He does come, learn this thing. If you would have Him fill you, obey Him. If you believe that an impulse is from the Spirit of God, follow it out. Never trifle with conscience—especially you that are beginning life. Mind you set the tune for the whole of your life by the tenderness of your consciences at the first. When I was a lad I learned a certain truth of God, which my friends and relatives did not know, but I had to follow my conscience. It looked very egotistical and wayward for a lad to set up his opinion against older people; but I could not help it. I saw believer's baptism in the Bible, and therefore the highest law compelled me to be obedient to that ordinance. I looked over the matter again and again, to see if it was not so; and I became more and more assured as to the mind of the Lord. Therefore I was not disobedient. It is true that it was suggested to me that if I did follow out my views, I should have to cut out quite another career for myself from the one anticipated; but I could not help that. I must do the Lord's will, whatever might be the consequences. From that day to this I have never had cause to regret my youthful decision. The trial was severe at the time, but it was beneficial to my whole character. It taught me to follow the truth of God wherever it might lead me, and to expect the Spirit of God to abide with me in so doing. Since then I have often come to a place where interest has gone one way, and principle has gone another; but it has not cost me half-a-minute's thought which way should be my way. I must follow what I believe to be right and true, and preach what I believe to be God's Word; and I will, by God's grace, do so, whether men hear or whether they ignore. Young Men, young Women, mind you begin straight. Do not begin with truckling and making compromises; if you take your hats off to the devil today, you will have to take your shoes off to him soon; and by-and-by you will become utterly his slaves. Be strong for the truth of God. Quit yourselves like men. Stand fast for God and holiness. You will be filled with the Spirit if you are obedient to Him.

If you are filled with the Spirit of God, and wish to retain His gracious presence, speak about Him. Note this, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking." That is a curious word to follow so soon. The Holy Spirit is not a dumb Spirit; He sets us speaking. "Speaking to yourselves"; it is a poor audience; but still it is a choice audience if you speak to your brethren. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Beloved, when the Spirit of God fills you, you will not only speak, but sing! Let the holy power have free course; do not quench the Spirit. If you feel like singing all the while, sing all the while, and let others know that there is a joy in the possession of the Spirit of God which the world does not understand, but which you are feeling and to which you wish to bear witness. Oh, that the Spirit of God would come upon this entire church and fill you all to overflowing! May the members of other churches that are here tonight take home fire with them and set their churches on fire! The Lord bless you, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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